

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SHUM, SF
SUBJECT: PAC TERRORISM TRIAL

REF: PRETORIA 362

1. THE TERRORISM ACT TRIAL OF 18 ALLEGED PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS (PAC) MEMBERS IN THE CIRCUIT COURT AT BETHAL WAS ADJOURNED FEBRUARY 15 FOR ONE WEEK TO ALLOW THE DEFENSE COUNSEL TIME TO PREPARE FOR THE CROSS-EXAMINATION OF C.J. VAN DER MERWE, POLITICAL SCIENCE LECTURER AT RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY. DEFENSE COUNSEL HARRY PITMAN TOLD EMBOFF ON TELEPHONE THAT VAN DER MERWE WAS FIRST SUBSTANTIVE STATE WITNESS SINCE TRIAL RESUMED JANUARY 30. VAN DER MERWE TESTIFIED AS TO NATURE OF PAC IDEOLOGY AND LITERATURE.

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2. AFTER FEBRUARY 23 CROSS-EXAMINATION, JUSTICE CURLEWIS IS EXPECTED TO RULE ON STATE APPLICATION TO HAVE ALL BLACK WITNESSES GIVE EVIDENCE IN CAMERA IN ORDER TO PROTECT THEIR IDENTITIES. IN FEBRUARY 14 DEFENSE ARGUMENT AGAINST APPLICATION, A.M. WILSON NOTED LEGAL TRADITION OF OPEN TRIALS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND TOLD COURT IT WOULD BE "FANCIFUL IN THE EXTREME"

TO SUGGEST THAT THE IDENTITY OF THE STATE WITNESSES
WILL NOT BE KNOWN.

3. EMBOFF WILL ATTEND FEBRUARY 23 SESSION IN BETHAL.
PITMAN TOLD EMBOFF THAT IN CASE STATE APPLICATION FOR
IN CAMERA HEARING IS SUCCESSFUL, DEFENSE WILL RE-
QUEST COURT TO ALLOW DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE
TO REMAIN AT TRIAL.
NELSON

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Message Attributes

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